

27 March 2014

**Quarter 3 2013/14
Performance Management Report**

**Report of Corporate Management Team
Lorraine O'Donnell, Assistant Chief Executive
Councillor Simon Henig, Leader**

Purpose of the Report

1. To present progress against the council's corporate basket of performance indicators (PIs) and report other significant performance issues for the third quarter of 2013/14.

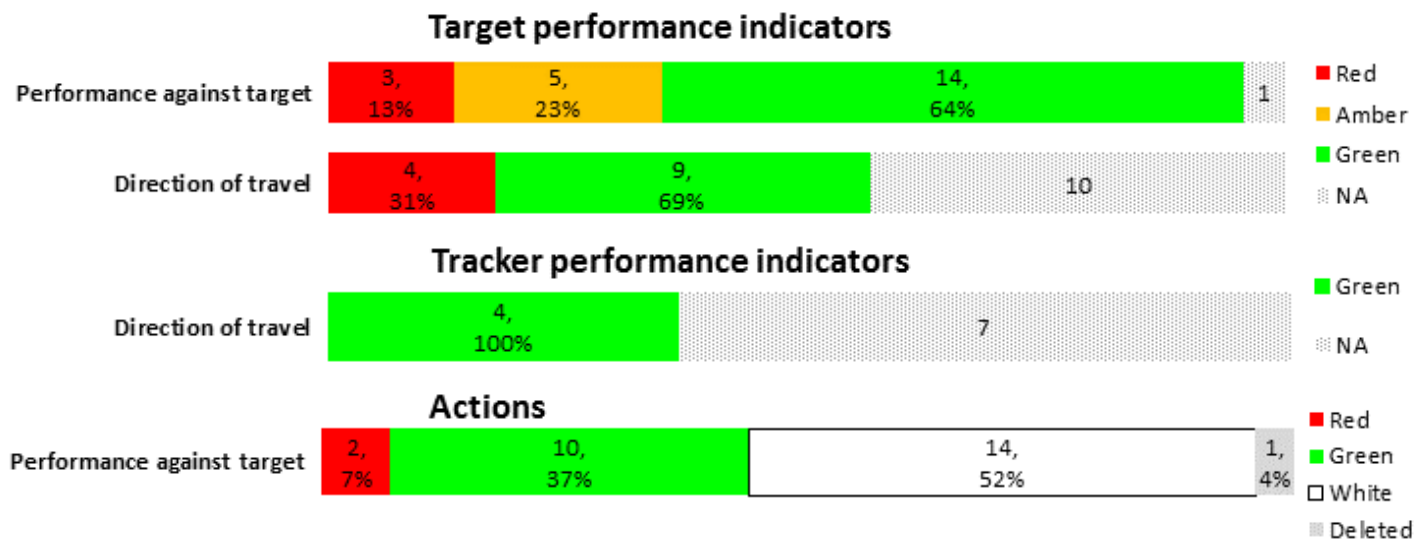
Background

2. This is the third quarterly corporate performance report of 2013/14 for the council highlighting performance for the period October to December 2013. The report contains information on key performance indicators, risks and Council Plan progress.
3. The report sets out an overview of performance and progress by Altogether priority theme. Key performance indicator progress is reported against two indicator types which comprise of:
 - a. Key target indicators – targets are set for indicators where improvements can be measured regularly and where improvement can be actively influenced by the council and its partners; and
 - b. Key tracker indicators – performance will be tracked but no targets are set for indicators which are long-term and/or which the council and its partners only partially influence.
4. A summary of key performance indicators is provided at Appendix 3. More detailed performance information and Altogether theme analyses are available on request from performance@durham.gov.uk.

Developments since Last Quarter

5. There is a stronger focus this year on volume measures in our performance framework. This allows us to better quantify productivity and to monitor the effects of reductions in resources and changes in volume of activity. Charts detailing some of the key volume measures which form part of the council's corporate basket of performance indicators are presented in Appendix 4.

Altogether Better Council: Overview



Council Performance

6. Key achievements this quarter include:

- a. Between October and December 2013, 212,323 telephone calls were answered which is 91% of all calls received compared to 88% at quarter 2. Improvements have also been seen in call handling times. During quarter 3, 87% were answered within three minutes against a target of 80%, an improvement on quarter 2, when 78% were answered within three minutes. The volume of telephone calls show 8.9% fewer calls received this quarter (235,064) when compared with quarter 2 (258,047) (see Appendix 4, Chart 1).
- b. During quarter 3, the average waiting time at a customer access point was 3 minutes 53 seconds, which is well within the 15 minutes target. Footfall in our Customer Access Points decreased from 93,059 in quarter 2 to 78,729 in quarter 3, partly due to the Christmas close down period. Face to face contact dropped in November and December, however contact during quarter 3 this year was 2.2% higher than the same period last year (see Appendix 4, Chart 2).
- c. During quarter 3, new housing benefit (HB) claims were processed in 21.02 days on average while new council tax reduction (CTR) claims were processed in 22.18 days on average. Current performance is better than the 25 day end of year target and the Great Britain average of 24 days for processing new HB claims.

The volume of new HB claims processed has increased from 2,962 in quarter 2 to 3,453 this quarter. The volume of new CTR claims processed has increased from 3,389 in quarter 2 to 3,801 this quarter (see Appendix 4, Chart 3).

Processing rates for changes of circumstances have continued to improve and have been well below the 12 day target for both HB and CTR claims for the last three months. The average time taken to process change of circumstances was on average 9.45 days for HB claims and 10.05 days for CTR claims. Performance is better than the Great Britain average of 11 days for HB claims.

The volume of change of circumstances for HB claims processed has fallen from 25,152 in quarter 2 to 22,873 this quarter. The volume of change of circumstances for CTR claims processed has fallen from 27,215 in quarter 2 to 24,319 this quarter (see Appendix 4, chart 4).

- d. The average days lost to sickness absence per full time equivalent (including school based employees) reduced from 9.31 in quarter 2 (October 2012 to September 2013) to

8.92 days this quarter (January to December 2013). This represents an improvement of over 4% and places current sickness levels better than the 9.05 days corporate target for the first time in 2013/14. Improving the management of attendance and reducing incidences of sickness absence is a priority for the council.

- e. Tenant rent arrears have fallen for Durham City Homes from 2.24% in quarter 2 to 2.05% this quarter and the target of 2.5% has been met. Dale and Valley Homes performance of 1.58% is well within target of 3% and it has improved from 1.64% reported last quarter. Arrears for East Durham Homes have fallen slightly from 2.89% in quarter 2 to 2.85% this quarter and the target of 3% has been achieved. There has been an improvement in performance during this quarter which is assumed to be linked to the two weeks rent free period in December.
- f. Good progress has been made with the following Council Plan and service plan actions:
 - i. Become public service network compliant allowing the council to trade services by March 2014. The Public Service Network Code of Connection (PSN CoCo) is a set of standards that govern the security, risk management and information assurance of networks connected to the Government Conveyance Network (GCN) and Government Connect Secure Extranet (GCSx). The council achieved PSN CoCo compliance on 22 October 2013 through a documented submission containing a number of planned activities to mitigate outstanding risks. The council's compliance is effective until mid-2014, when further assessment will be required.
 - ii. Increase availability of technology across the county by developing the Digital Durham programme for next generation broadband delivery to all areas of the county by March 2015. December 2013 saw the official launch of the first fibre cabinet in the programme located in Durham City Marketplace. This cabinet can supply fast speed broadband to businesses and residents in the heart of the city, supporting regeneration, economic growth and job opportunities. Also during December 2013 a further 22 cabinets were surveyed and are progressing to build stage. With an additional 112 cabinets to be surveyed before the end of March 2014, the first phase of the nine phase programme is well underway. Additional funding from the Rural Community Broadband Fund is being sought for Teesdale and Weardale with a final application to DEFRA expected during quarter 4 2013/14.

7. The key performance improvement issues for this theme are:

- a. Despite renewed focus on paying supplier invoices on time, performance continues to hover around 91%, short of the 92% target. Although December performance was 93%, performance is not yet consistent enough to deliver on-target performance over a quarter. Whilst it is clear that consistent compliance with agreed business processes is a matter that needs to be continuously highlighted, addressed and reinforced, a software issue arose during quarter 3 that slowed down the invoice payment process and may affect future performance.
- b. Employee appraisals recorded across the council has shown real improvement over the last year in particular and the introduction of email alerts for managers seems useful in this regard, but further and sustained effort is required by managers and supervisors to ensure that all relevant employees have undergone an appropriate appraisal event in the last 12 months and that this is recorded on the 'MyView' system. The percentage of performance appraisals completed and recorded fell slightly from 75.3% in quarter 2 to 73.3% this quarter. This is short of the 80% corporate target.
- c. The percentage of Freedom of Information (FOI) and Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) requests responded to within 20 days was 80% this quarter which was below the national standard of 85%. Current performance reflects a good month in

October but slightly lower performance in November and December. The volume of FOI and EIR requests received this quarter was 319 which has increased compared with 249 last quarter and 189 at same period last year (see Appendix 4, chart 5).

- d. Key Council Plan actions behind target in this theme include:
 - i. The production of a regeneration investment plan to maximise external funding for the council and its partners was due for completion by December 2013. This has been delayed until April 2014. This action was delayed from September 2013 to December 2013 in quarter 2.
 - ii. The delivery of a programme of data protection health checks to ensure that personal data held by the council is managed effectively was due by December 2013. An initial pilot programme has been completed with full rollout now due by September 2014.
- e. There is also one action that has been deleted which is to undertake a review of the Local Council Tax Support Scheme by December 2013. This action has been deleted as there are no changes required for 2014/15 and the review will be carried out in the Spring of 2014 ahead of a decision for 2015/16.

8. The key risks to successfully delivering the objectives of this theme are:-

- a. Government ongoing funding cuts which now extend to at least 2017/18 will continue to have an increasing major impact on all council services. This key risk is categorised with critical impact and highly probable likelihood. Sound financial forecasting is in place based on thorough examination of the Government's "red book" plans.
- b. If there was to be slippage in the delivery of the agreed Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) savings projects, this will require further savings to be made from other areas, which may result in further service reductions and job losses. This key risk is categorised with critical impact and possible likelihood. The implementation of the delivery plan by ACE is closely being monitored by Corporate Management Team (CMT) and Cabinet.
- c. If local authority schools and other local authority services choose not to take council services, together with the loss of community buildings, both Technical and Building Services could see a loss of business. This key risk is categorised with major impact and probable likelihood. A draft booklet will be produced to promote Building Services ready for distribution throughout council services.
- d. Potential restitution of search fees going back to 2005. This key risk is categorised with moderate impact and highly probable likelihood. The mitigation of this risk is dependent upon the outcome of the negotiations and litigation currently being defended by lawyers instructed in group litigation.
- e. If we were to fail to comply with central government's Public Services Network Code of Connection criteria, this would put some of our core business processes at risk, for example, revenues and benefits. This key risk is categorised with critical impact and possible likelihood. In May 2013, an ICT Health Check was carried out and a number of recommendations were made to bring the council to a position of compliance.

Recommendations and Reasons

- 9. That the Corporate Issues Overview and Scrutiny Committee receive the report and consider any performance issues arising there from.

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Appendix 1: Implications

Finance

Latest performance information is being used to inform corporate, service and financial planning.

Staffing

Performance against a number of relevant corporate health PIs has been included to monitor staffing levels and absence rates.

Risk

Reporting of significant risks and their interaction with performance is integrated into the quarterly monitoring report.

Equality and Diversity/Public Sector Equality Duty

Corporate health PIs and key actions relating to equality and diversity issues are monitored as part of the performance monitoring process.

Accommodation

Not applicable

Crime and Disorder

A number of PIs and key actions relating to crime and disorder are continually monitored in partnership with Durham Constabulary.

Human Rights

Not applicable

Consultation

Not applicable

Procurement

Not applicable

Disability Issues

Corporate health PIs and key actions relating to accessibility issues and employees with a disability are monitored as part of the performance monitoring process.

Legal Implications

Not applicable

Appendix 2: Key to symbols used within the report

Where icons appear in this report, they have been applied to the most recently available information.

Performance Indicators:

Direction of travel

Latest reported data have improved from comparable period

GREEN

Latest reported data remain in line with comparable period

AMBER

Latest reported data have deteriorated from comparable period

RED

Performance against target

Performance better than target

Getting there - performance approaching target (within 2%)

Performance >2% behind target

Actions:

WHITE

Complete (Action achieved by deadline/achieved ahead of deadline)

GREEN

Action on track to be achieved by the deadline

RED

Action not achieved by the deadline/unlikely to be achieved by the deadline

Benchmarking:

GREEN

Performance better than other authorities based on latest benchmarking information available

AMBER

Performance in line with other authorities based on latest benchmarking information available

RED

Performance worse than other authorities based on latest benchmarking information available

Appendix 3: Summary of Key Performance Indicators

Table 1: Key Target Indicators

Ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	Current performance to target	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	National figure	*North East figure **Nearest statistical neighbour figure	Period covered
Altogether Better Council										
75	Percentage of calls answered within 3 minutes	87	Oct - Dec 2013	80	GREEN	New Indicator	NA			
76	Average waiting time at a customer access point (mins:secs)	03:53	Oct - Dec 2013	15:00	GREEN	05:17	GREEN			
77	Percentage all ICT Service Desk incidents resolved on time	91	Oct - Dec 2013	90	GREEN	93	RED			
78	Average time taken to process new housing benefit claims (days)	21.02	Oct - Dec 2013	22.0	GREEN	New Indicator	NA	23 GREEN	25** GREEN	Jul - Sept 2013
79	Average time taken to process new council tax reduction claims (days)	22.18	Oct - Dec 2013	22.0	AMBER	New Indicator	NA	33 GREEN	27** GREEN	Jan - Mar 2013
80	Average time taken to process change of circumstances for housing benefit claims (days)	9.45	Oct - Dec 2013	11.0	GREEN	New Indicator	NA	11 GREEN	9** RED	Jul - Sept 2013
81	Average time taken to process change of circumstances for council tax reduction claims (days)	10.05	Oct - Dec 2013	11.0	GREEN	New Indicator	NA	16 GREEN	12** GREEN	Jan - Dec 13
82	Percentage of council tax recovered for all years excluding the current year	99.1	As at Dec 2013	98.5	GREEN	NA	NA			
83	Percentage of business rates recovered for all years excluding the current year	99.2	As at Dec 2013	98.5	GREEN	NA	NA			

Ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	Current performance to target	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	National figure	*North East figure **Nearest statistical neighbour figure	Period covered
84	Savings delivered against the MTFP (£m)	18.7	As at Dec 2013	20.9	Not comparable [1]	NA	NA			
85	Percentage of council tax collected in-year	82.9	Apr - Dec 2013	84.0	AMBER	82.7	GREEN	97.4 Not comparable	96.7* Not comparable	2012/13
86	Percentage of business rates collected in-year	85.4	Apr - Dec 2013	86.0	AMBER	84.3	GREEN	97.7 Not comparable	96.7* Not comparable	2012/13
87	Percentage of accounts paid to the council within 30 days (debtors)	79.5	Oct - Dec 2013	73.0	GREEN	73.6	GREEN			
88	Income generated from council owned business space (£)	1,986,971	Apr - Dec 2013	1,927,500	GREEN	2,134,000	RED			
89	Percentage of local authority tenant satisfaction with landlord services	86	As at Apr 2013	87	AMBER	New indicator	NA			
90	Current tenant arrears as a percentage of the annual rent debit - Dale & Valley Homes	1.58	As at Dec 2013	3.0	GREEN	1.72	GREEN			
91	Current tenant arrears as a percentage of the annual rent debit - Durham City Homes	2.05	As at Dec 2013	2.5	GREEN	2.45	GREEN			
92	Current tenant arrears as a percentage of the annual rent debit - East Durham Homes	2.85	As at Dec 2013	3	GREEN	2.88	GREEN			
93	Average asset rating of Display Energy Certificates (DECs) in county council buildings	98.9	As at Sept 2013	96.0	RED	98.4	RED			

Ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	Current performance to target	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	National figure	*North East figure **Nearest statistical neighbour figure	Period covered
94	Percentage of Freedom of Information (FOI) and Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) requests responded to within statutory deadlines	80	Oct - Dec 2013	85	RED	73	GREEN			
95	Percentage of undisputed invoices paid within 30 days to our suppliers	91	Oct - Dec 2013	92	AMBER	91.4	RED			
96	Percentage of performance appraisals completed	73.3	Jan - Dec 2013	80.0	RED	NA	NA			
97	Days / shifts lost to sickness absence – all services including school staff	8.92	Jan - Dec 2013	9.05	GREEN	9.7	GREEN			

[\[1\] Annual target](#)

Table 2: Key Tracker Indicators

Ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Previous period data	Performance compared to previous period	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	National figure	*North East figure **Nearest statistical neighbour figure	Period covered
Altogether Better Council										
169	Staff aged under 25 as percentage of post count	5.45	As at Dec 2013	5.55	NA	4.37	NA			
170	Staff aged over 50 as a percentage of post count	37.79	As at Dec 2013	36.84	NA	37.80	NA			
171	Women in the top 5 percent of earners	52.11	As at Dec 2013	51.53	NA	50.20	NA			
172	BME as a percentage of post count	1.4	As at Dec 2013	1.4	NA	0.96	NA			
173	Staff with disability (DDA definition) as a percentage of post count	2.9	As at Dec 2013	2.93	NA	3.10	NA			
174	Percentage of abandoned calls	9	Oct - Dec 2013	12	GREEN	10	GREEN			
175	Percentage of calls answered within 1 minute	76	Oct - Dec 2013	60	GREEN	67	GREEN			
176	Staff - total headcount (ONS return)	17,577	As at Dec 2013	17,533	NA	17,743	NA			
177	Staff - total full time equivalent (FTE) (ONS return)	14,211	As at Dec 2013	14,198	NA	14,276	NA			
178	Number of RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries,	17	Apr - Dec	16	Not comparable [2]	26	GREEN			

Ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Previous period data	Performance compared to previous period	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	National figure	*North East figure **Nearest statistical neighbour figure	Period covered
	Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations) incidents reported to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE)		2013							
179	Percentage of posts with no absence (excluding SCHOOLS)	73	Oct - Dec 2013	78.31	RED	69.44	GREEN			

[\[2\] This data is cumulative and the figure is based on 12 months data for the year end so comparisons are not applicable.](#)

Appendix 4: Volume Measures

Chart 1 - Telephone calls

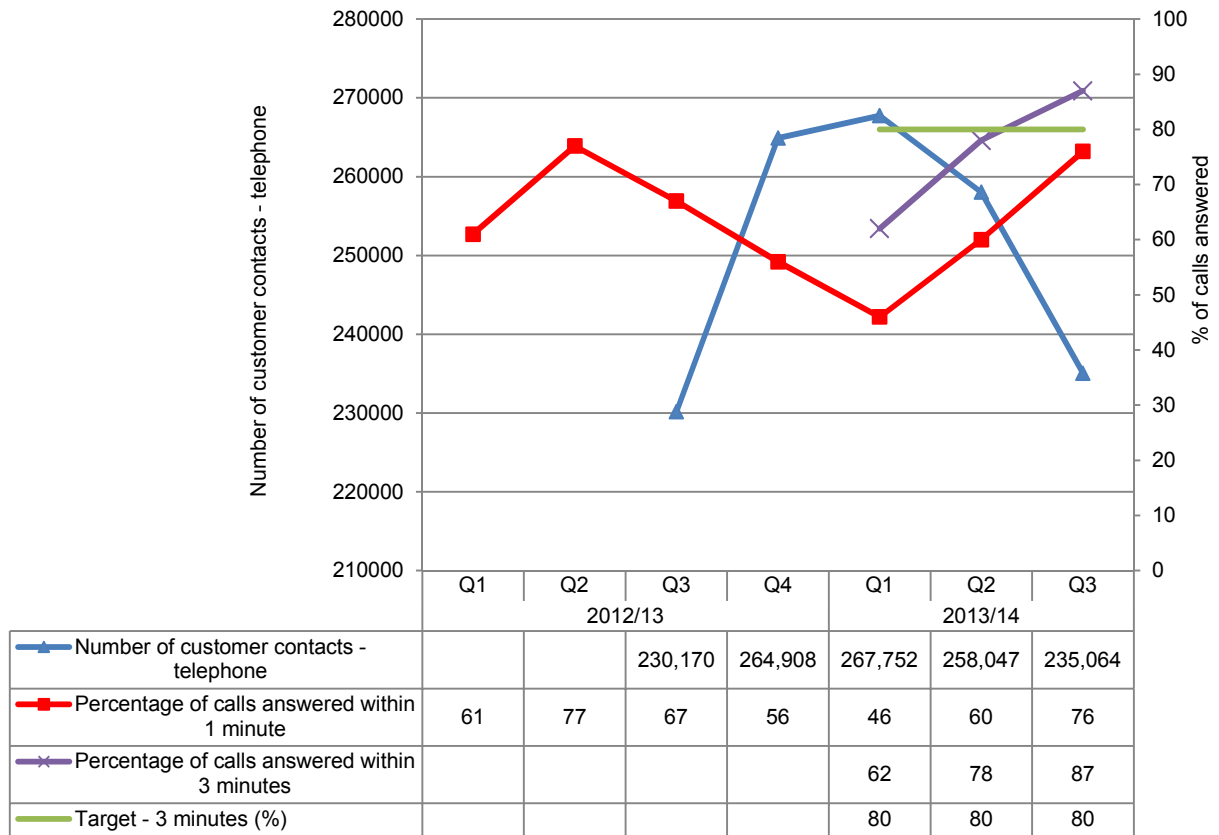


Chart 2 – Face to face contacts

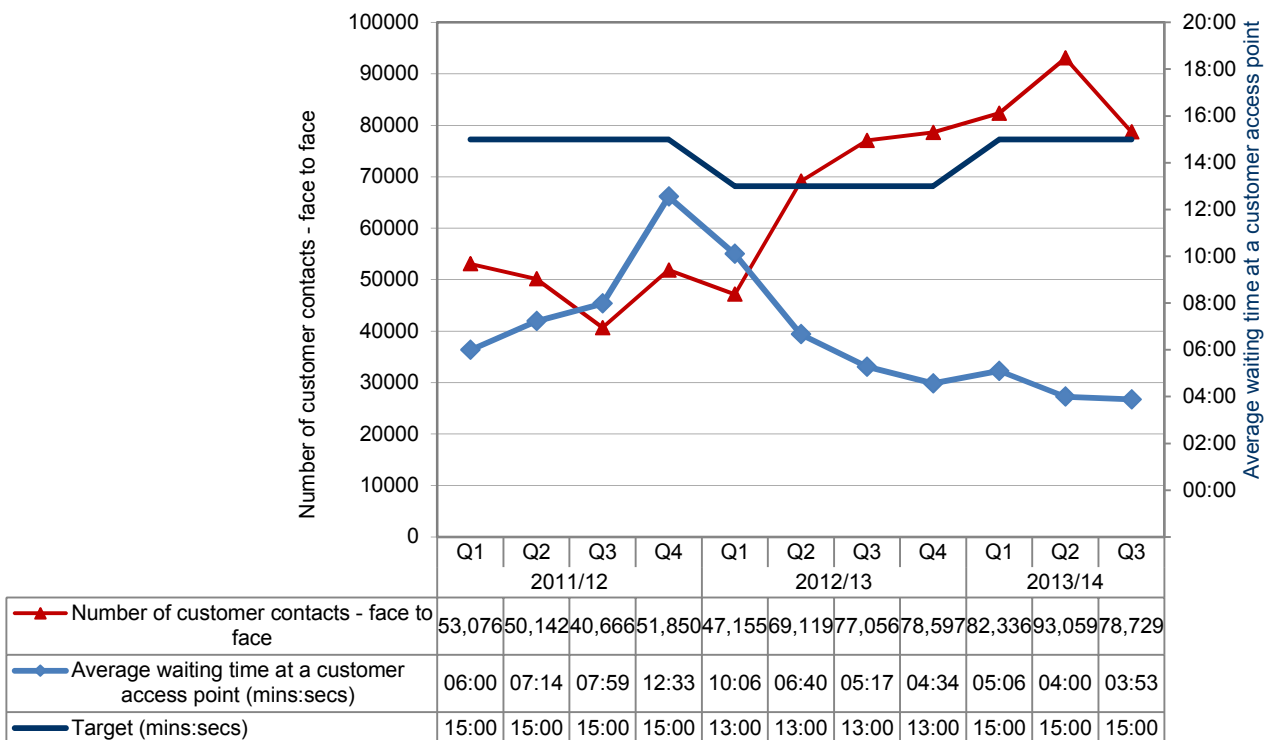
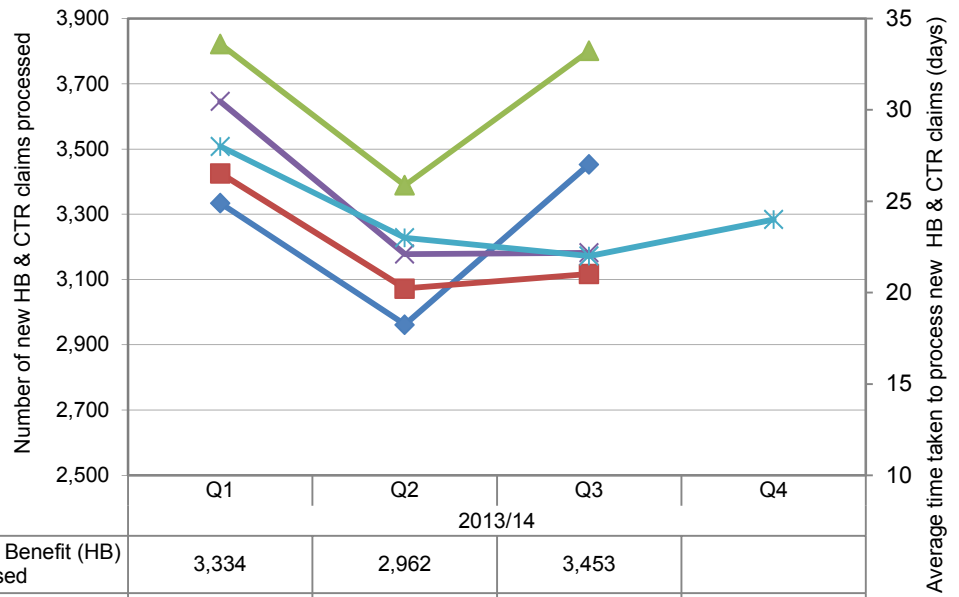
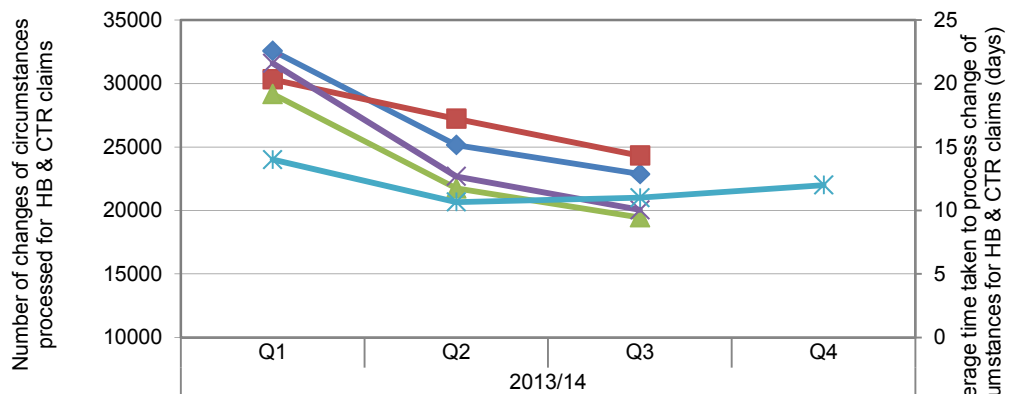


Chart 3 – Benefits – new claims



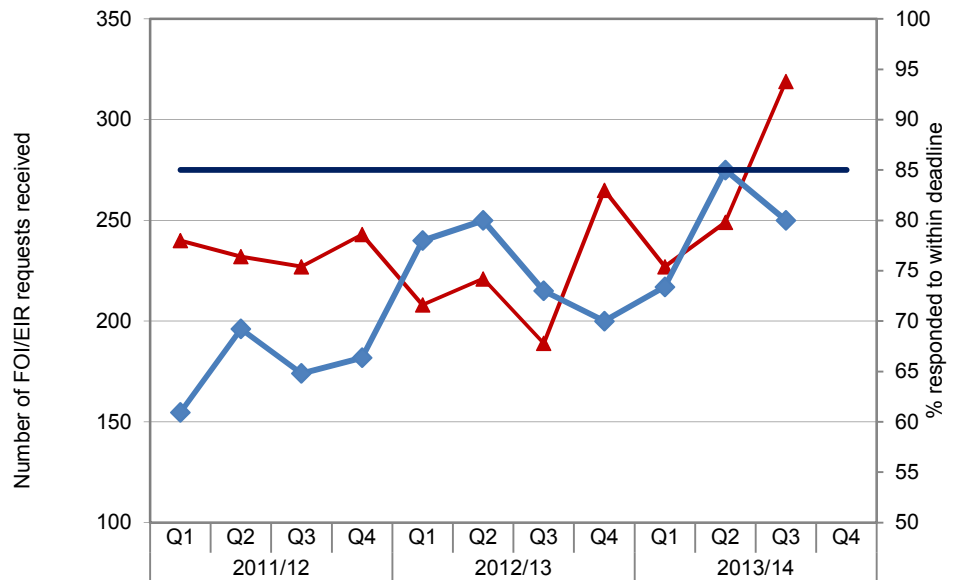
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Number of new Housing Benefit (HB) claims processed	3,334	2,962	3,453	
Number of new Council Tax Reduction (CTR) claims processed	3,822	3,389	3,801	
Average time taken to process new HB claims (days)	26.53	20.23	21.02	
Average time taken to process new CTR claims (days)	30.46	22.11	22.18	
Target - discrete quarter (days)	28	23	22	24

Chart 4 – Benefits – changes of circumstances



	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Number of changes of circumstances processed for Housing Benefit (HB) claims	32,574	25,152	22,873	
Number of Changes of Circumstances processed for Council Tax Reduction (CTR) claims	30,326	27,215	24,319	
Average time taken to process change of circumstances for HB claims (days)	19.18	11.74	9.45	
Average time taken to process change of circumstances for CTR claims (days)	21.59	12.68	10.05	
Target - discrete quarter (days)	14	10.66	11	12

Chart 5 – Freedom of Information (FOI) requests



	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
	2011/12				2012/13				2013/14			
Number of FOI/EIR requests received	240	232	227	243	208	221	189	265	227	249	319	
% of FOI/EIR requests responded to within statutory deadlines	61	69	65	66	78	80	73	70	73	85	80	
Target (%)	85	85	85	85	85	85	85	85	85	85	85	85